

February 9, 1976

The whole thing just plain and simply doesn't make sense except for this one particular special purpose. We will put the political subdivisions in the State of Nebraska into the horse racing gambling business so that they can build a horse racing track to gamble on. If that isn't a bill that's worth killing, there hasn't been one around here for a long time that's worth killing. We certainly should support Senator Rasmussen in his very noble effort to keep Nebraska clean.

PRESIDENT: Senator Cope.

SENATOR COPE: Mr. President, members of the Legislature. I will relinquish five minutes of my time. I want the balance of the five to Senator Schmit to answer Senator Kelly.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Well I usually don't pay too much attention to Senator Kelly so I can't exactly say what he was talking about. I did catch the part where he referred to "let's keep Nebraska clean". Now in regard to "keeping Nebraska clean" that means that racing at Kearney on a quarterhorse track would not be clean. Racing at Fonner on a thoroughbred track would be clean. Now I don't see the difference. Racing is racing, betting is betting, gambling is gambling. I don't think we're going to change the people on that, Senator Kelly. I just hope that we haven't gotten our wires crossed here. You know the definition of clean, many times, is in the eyes of the beholder. I'm going to wait to further identify the Mr. Clean's in here after we've had all the opposition to my bill and all the support to Senator Rasmussen's kill motion.

SENATOR COPE: Now members of the Legislature, I'd certainly ask you to oppose the kill motion of Senator Rasmussen. Let's look at it from a business basis. This has been mentioned before, I'll mention it again. What can the state lose? Not a penny because we do not have the revenue now. What can it do? Let me give you an example and I'll use Buffalo County, but remember this is permissive legislation and this can apply to any county in the state if they so desire, if this legislation is passed. Here's what it can do for Buffalo County, it can furnish an agricultural complex for Central Nebraska. It will make a large enough place for 4-H shows, national and statewide. It will be a place for livestock shows, national and state, or many, many agricultural activities. I'm specifically thinking of our Gateway Show, our Gateway Exposition. I would invite every member of this Legislature to attend Gateway this Spring. In a very few years this has been increased to 400 exhibitors from all over the United States with an attendance of 80,000 people in three days. We have outgrown our facilities. We need a new facility, an indoor.... This would furnish it. Of course, the important thing is that it will give the quarterhorse people a place to race their horses. They do not have that facility other than Broken Bow. Broken Bow is doing a fine job. We do need additional facilities, not just for state but from a national standpoint.